

GREATER MANCHESTER INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
REPORT FOR INFORMATION

COMMITTEE: Bus Network and GMPTE Services Committee
DATE: 6th August 2010
SUBJECT: Metroshuttle Patronage and Performance
REPORT OF: Bus/Rail Director, GMPTE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the Metroshuttle bus network patronage and performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members of the Committee are recommended to note the contents of this report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

'Metroshuttle Patronage and Service Performance Monitoring' report to the 13th November 2009 Bus Network and GMPTE Services Committee.

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1 Introduction & Executive Summary

- 1.1 There are currently five Metroshuttle routes in operation in Greater Manchester – three in Manchester city centre, one in Bolton town centre and one in Stockport town centre. The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the Metroshuttle bus network patronage and performance.
- 1.2 Patronage is measured each day by the bus operators, mostly using electronic ticketed machines on the buses. The performance of the services is also regularly monitored by GMPTE.
- 1.3 Patronage on all Manchester Metroshuttle has been stale since November 2009.
- 1.4 The Manchester Metroshuttle patronage increased by just under 5% from December 2009 (180,615) to March 2010 (189,191).
- 1.5 Major road works continue to affect the performance of the all the Manchester Metroshuttle services.
- 1.6 Patronage and performance of the Stockport and Bolton Metroshuttle continues to improve. Stockport peaking at 23,918 and Bolton 9,439 in March.

2 Background

- 2.1 The first two routes of the Metroshuttle free bus network was launched in the City in September 2002, with services 1 and 2 linking the principal rail stations and its commercial and tourism centres. Both services initially operated at frequent intervals between 7am and 7pm, Mondays to Saturdays. Service 1 was extended from July 2009 to run every 10 minutes from 7pm until 9pm on a trial basis. Service 1 and 2 both run between 10am and 6pm on Sundays. Service 3 was introduced in September 2005 linking Piccadilly and Salford Central Rail Stations with the Spinningfields business district. This service also operates at frequent intervals between 7am and 7pm Mondays to Saturdays only.
- 2.2 The Manchester services are presently operated by First Manchester through a contract with GMPTE, and supported by ongoing funding from GMITA, Manchester City Council, NCP Manchester and, from 2004, Allied London Properties.
- 2.3 The Bolton Metroshuttle (service 500) was introduced on in November 2008. It was initially operated by Bluebird Bus and Coach through a contract with GMPTE and supported by funding from Bolton Council and GMITA. The contract was let to Maytree travel from in January 2010. Service 500 links the bus station and rail interchange with the shops and markets in the town. It runs at frequent intervals from 0730 until 1800, Mondays to Fridays, and from 0830 until 1730 on Saturdays.
- 2.4 The Stockport Metroshuttle (service 300) was introduced in November 2008, initially marketed as the 'Stockport Town Centre Shuttle' it adopted the Metroshuttle brand in August 2009. The service was initially operated by Solutions SK, being replaced by Swans Travel on 1st June 2010. This service is funded by Stockport Council and GMITA. Service 300 links Stockport Rail Station

with the bus station, shops and leisure facilities in the town centre and runs every 12 minutes from 0800 until 1800, Mondays to Saturdays, and from 1024 until 1700 on Sundays.

3 Manchester Metroshuttle

3.1 Patronage

3.1.1 Patronage data is provided to GMPTE by Metroshuttle operators from information entered onto their Electronic Ticket Machines by the bus drivers.

3.1.2 The tables below summarises the patronage and cost per passenger on the Manchester Metroshuttle contract by route.

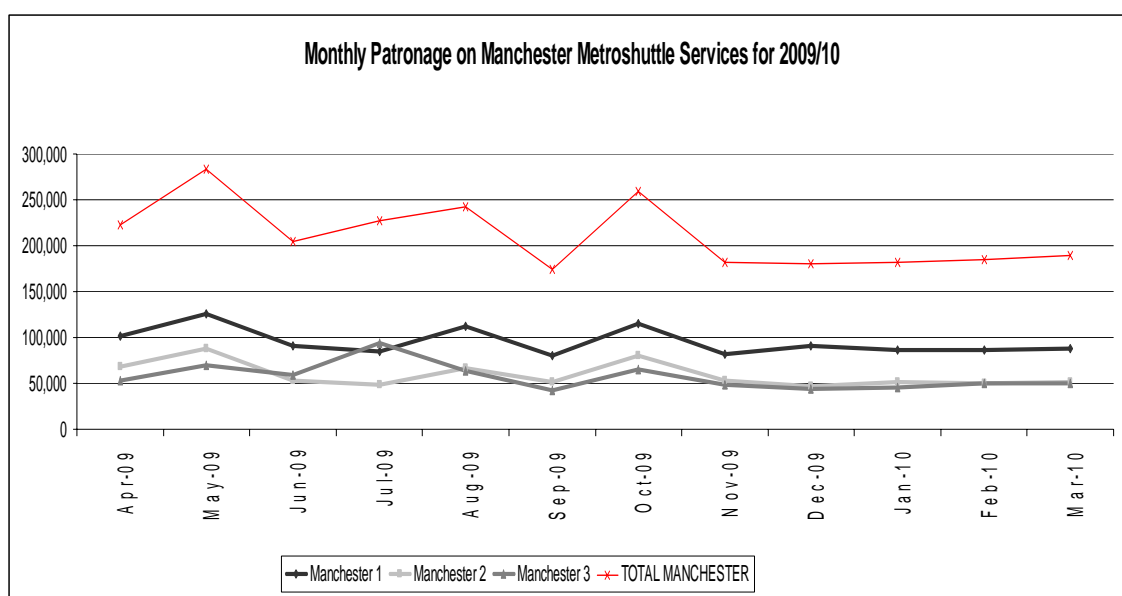
Table 1 Annual Patronage & Cost Trends for Manchester Metroshuttle

Service	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/2010	% Change since 2006
	(Apr-Mar)	(Apr-Mar)	(Apr-Mar)	(Apr-Mar)	
Manchester 1	1,070,020	1,110,633	1,215,887	1,141,364	7%
Manchester 2	661,056	671,242	737,778	708,977	7%
Manchester 3	428,933	520,074	620,430	681,040	59%
Total	2,160,009	2,301,948	2,574,095	2,531,381	17%
Annual Cost	£1,253,358	£1,284,470	£1,539,005	£1,556,143	24%
Cost Per Passenger	£0.58	£0.56	£0.60	£0.61	6%

3.1.3 Since 2006 the total Manchester Metroshuttle patronage has increased by 17%, In particular Metroshuttle 3 patronage has seen an increase of 59%, from 428,933 in 2006/7 to 681,430 in 2009/10.

3.1.4 The cost for Manchester Metroshuttle has risen by 24% over this period. The contract increase is an agreed year on year RPI. Since 2006 the cost per passenger has risen form £0.58 to £0.61. This is an increase of 6%. However this price increase incorporates a cost of £71,626 for the service 1 extension to 9pm

Graph 1 Patronage Month by Month 2009/10



- 3.1.5 Overall there has been a rise in patronage since 2006. However, the last 12 months, particularly since November 2009 the patronage has flat lined.
- 3.1.6 There have been over 300 events and roadwork's in Manchester City Centre logged by GMPTE Traffic Manager between April 2009 to March 2010. Events such as;
- United Utilities, throughout the year.
 - Gas Alliance, throughout the year.
 - Bridge repair work, Whitworth Street. Summer 2009.
 - Metrolink track replacement; April to October 2009.
 - Bupa Run, May 2009
 - Manchester United victory parade; May 2009.
 - Several Marches, including St Georges day parade; April 2009
- 3.1.8 Metroshuttle 3 has shown an increase in patronage over the same period. The redevelopment of Spinning Fields contributing to this.
- 3.1.9 Measure have been incorporated into the new Manchester Metroshuttle tender to ensure that passengers are automatically recorded on entry, leading to greater accuracy.

3.2 Performance

- 3.2.1 GMPTE monitors the performance of the five Metroshuttle services as part of the Punctuality & Reliability Monitoring System (PRMS).
- 3.2.2 Observations are undertaken at Shudehill Interchange and Piccadilly Rail Station Manchester; Services are sampled during specific time bands throughout the day and over 3 days during the quarter.
- 3.2.3 The measures used by the Department for Transport and the bus industry to assess bus service performance depend on whether the service is meant to run at frequent intervals (every 10 minutes or greater) or is a timed service running less frequently.
- 3.2.4 Frequent interval services are measured in terms of Excess Wait Time (EWT). This is the time passengers have to wait in excess of half the service interval. The DfT's minimum standard EWT is 1.25 minutes, meaning that the average Actual Wait Time (AWT) for customers of a 10 minute service should be no more than 6.25 minutes.
- 3.2.5 The table below provides a summary of the average Excess Wait Time for the high frequency Metroshuttle services during Quarter 3 (October – December) 2009: All three services had an overall EWT well within the minimum standard.

Table 2 EWT for Manchester Metroshuttle Services 2009/2010

Service	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
	Apr-Jun 09	Jul-Sep 09	Oct-Dec 09	Jan-Mar 10	2009/2010
Manchester 1	0.76	-0.53	-1.06	-0.77	-0.11
Manchester 2	0.95	1.04	0.26	1.12	0.83
Manchester 3	1.89	0.11	0.72	0.09	0.82
Grand Total	1.02	0.30	0.14	0.23	0.49

Source: GMPTE PRMS Monitoring. Note: Figures assume a minimum frequency of 10 minute intervals. Service 1 is contracted to provide a higher (6 minute) frequency on weekdays and service 3 is contracted to run at 8 minute intervals in the morning peak. EWT for both routes should therefore always be substantially less than 1.25.

3.2.6 The Manchester Metroshuttle have been affected by the water mains replacement works on Deansgate and Shudehill/Miller Street their diversion routes have often resulted in increased mileage and journey times. Despite the roadworks Metroshuttle 1 and 2 managed performance within the Traffic Commissioner standard. Only Metroshuttle 3, during quarter 1 exceeded the Traffic Commissioner standard with an EWT of 1.89. This coincides with the commencement of utility work along Deansgate.

3.3 Customer Comments

3.3.1 GMPTE received forty three comments from customers about the Manchester Metroshuttle between 1st April 2009 and 31st March 2010.

3.3.2 Thirty of the forty three comments (70%) related to the conduct of the driver, nine about the reliability of the service (21%), one comment about over crowding, one driver commendation and two non specific comments.

3.3.3 Driver conduct comments include driver being rude to passengers, driver being abusive and driver being unhelpful.

3.3.4 GMPTE meets with First every 6 weeks to discuss performance and action has been taken by the company to address the concerns that have been raised in order to ensure that Metroshuttle remains a quality service.

3.3.5 First Manchester take customer comments regarding driver conduct seriously. If a customer comment is upheld the driver receives further training or is removed from the Metroshuttle rota, or dealt with in line with their internal disciplinary procedure.

3.3.6 At times customer comments do not have enough specific detail that allows First Manchester to fully investigate the comment, or allow them to trace the driver. This is exasperated by First "load up and go" policy. This often makes identifying individual drivers difficult.

3.4 Manchester Metroshuttle Service Contract Renewal

3.4.1 The contract for the Manchester service is due to be renewed at the end of September. As previously reported to this committee, as part of GMPTE's successful Green Bus Fund award, twenty low-carbon vehicles have been ordered for deployment on the service and are currently in manufacture. At the

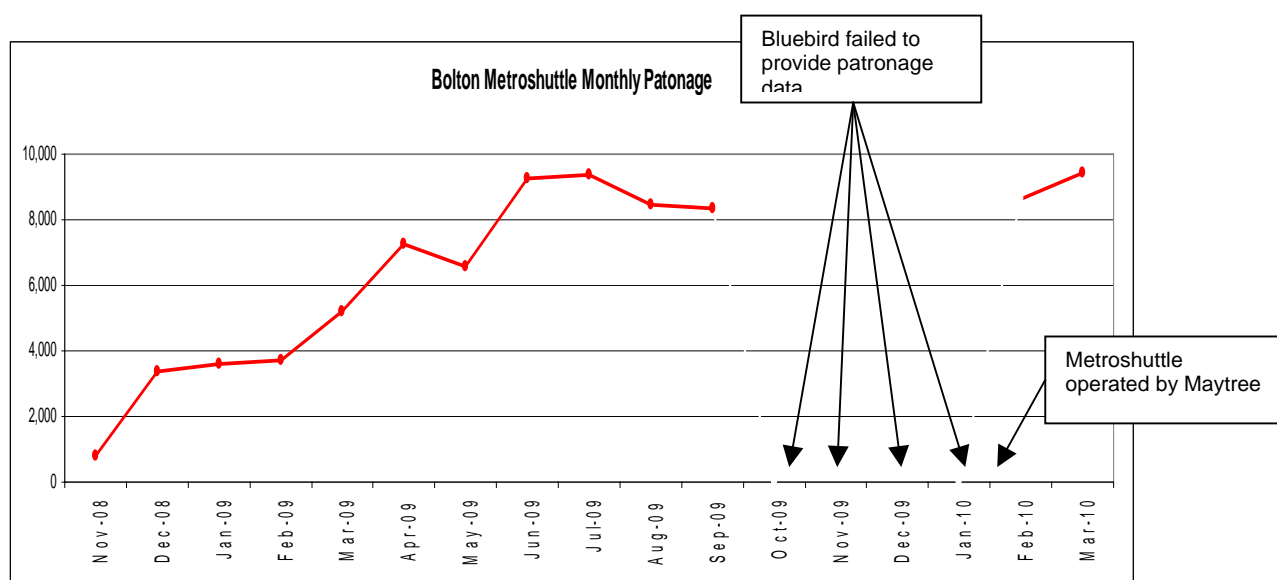
time of writing, the tender process for the service contract is still in the evaluation stage, the outcome of which will inform further discussions with the external funding partners (Manchester City Council, National Car Parks and Allied London). As well as incorporating brand new environmentally-friendly vehicles, a greater emphasis has been placed on raising the standard of service quality which will be delivered and in developing an updated branding concept for the service re-launch, in order to meet aspirations to provide a much improved service for the city centre.

4.0 Bolton Metroshuttle

4.1 Patronage

4.1.1 The graph below shows the patronage on the Bolton Metroshuttle.

Graph 2 Patronage Month by Month November 2008 to March 2010



4.1.2 Bolton Metroshuttle patronage has increased dramatically over an 18 month period, despite missing data in November, December and January. Bolton Metroshuttle patronage has significantly increased since the change of operator in January 2010.

4.1.3 Bluebird Bus and Coach did not submit patronage data for the Bolton Metroshuttle in November, December and January. Bluebird Bus and Coach cited ticket machine failure as being the cause.

4.2 Performance

4.2.1 Observations are undertaken in Bolton Bus Station. Services are sampled during specific time bands throughout the day and over 3 days during the quarter.

Table 3 EWT for Manchester Metroshuttle Services 2009/2010

Service	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
	Apr-Jun 09	Jul-Sep 09	Oct-Dec 09	Jan-Mar 10	2009/2010
Bolton 500	0.19	0.34	0.81	0.26	0.44

Source: GMPTE PRMS Monitoring. Note: Figures assume a minimum frequency of 10 minute intervals. Service 1 is contracted to provide a higher (6 minute) frequency on weekdays and service 3 is contracted to run at 8 minute intervals in the morning peak. EWT for both routes should therefore always be substantially less than 1.25.

4.2.2 The Bolton Metroshuttle comfortably met the Traffic Commissioner's standards on punctuality throughout.

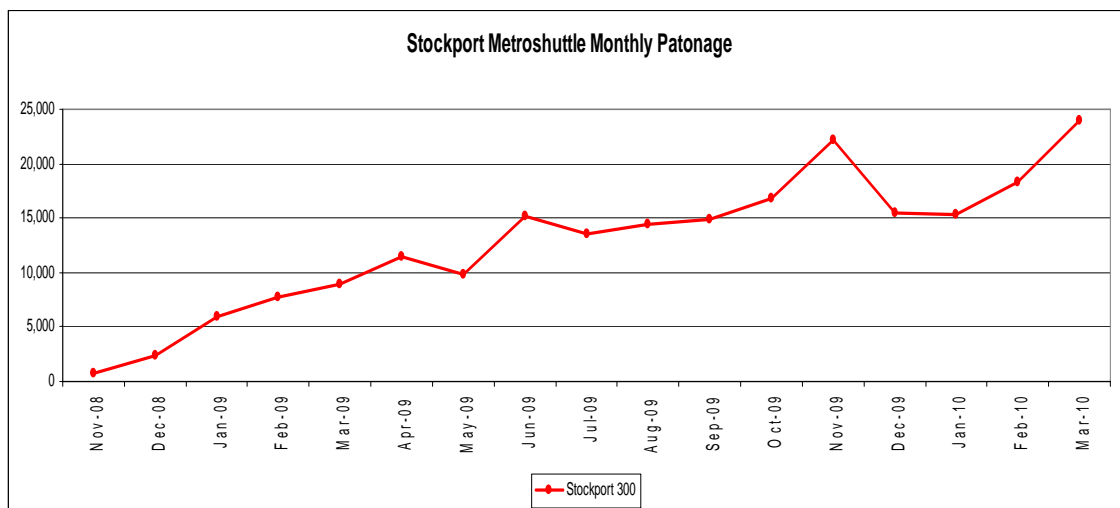
4.3 Customer Comments

4.3.1 Four complaints were received between 1st April 2009 and 31st March 2010. All four were for driver conduct.

5.0 Stockport Metroshuttle

5.1 Patronage

Graph 3 Patronage Month by Month November 2008 to March 2010



5.1.1 Since November 2008 the patronage has increased by over 300%, notably between March 2009 and March 2010 when it moved from 8,951 in March

5.1.2 Patronage on the Stockport, Metroshuttle increased by 167% from 8,951 in March 2009 to 23,918 in March 2010,

5.2 Performance

5.2.1 Observations are undertaken in Stockport Bus Station. Services are sampled during specific time bands throughout the day and over 3 days during the quarter.

5.2.2 Less frequent services, such as the Stockport Metroshuttle, which is scheduled to operate every 12 minutes, are measured by their reliability and punctuality. Reliability of services is an indication of the number of journeys that do not run and are not therefore observed and punctuality is the number of journeys that ran on time within a window of tolerance of no more than 1 minute early and 5 minutes late.

5.2.3 The Traffic Commissioner's standard for timed services is a punctuality result

within the scale of no less than 70% at an intermediate timing point and 95% at a start point. The minimum standard for punctuality is 90%.

5.2.4 The table below shows the punctuality results for the Stockport service.

Table 4 Punctuality for Metroshuttle Services 2009/2010

Stockport 300	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
	Apr-Jun 09	Jul-Sep 09	Oct-Dec 09	Jan-Mar 10	2009/2010
Reliability	N/A	96.6%	N/A	96.0%	96.2%
Punctuality	N/A	84.5%	N/A	56.9%	67.9%

Source: GMPTE PRMS Monitoring

5.2.4 The punctuality performance in quarter 2 was within the Traffic Commissioner standard. However, in quarter 4 the service achieved a very poor result, and was performing below the Traffic Commissioner's minimum standard. GMPTE will continue to monitor this service and address the issues with the operator.

5.2.5 The reliability whilst not as poor as the punctuality could be improved.

5.2.6 Problems on the M60 can cause sporadic problems in Stockport centre.

5.3 Customer Comments

5.3.1 One comment was received by GMPTE in relation to the Stockport service between 1st April 2009 and 31st March 2010. This was for driver conduct. Solutions SK offered no explanation to this complaint.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Recommendations appear at the front of this report.

Michael Renshaw
Bus & Rail Director